



WHAT EVERY CHURCH PLANTER SHOULD KNOW

ABOUT THIS BOOK >

This book is a Compilation of Essays from Church Planters, Coaches, Pastors and Entrepreneurs. Written for the New Church Planter. Edited & Compiled by Kendra Malloy in conjunction with Portable Church® Industries.

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS



We have been working with church planters, pastors & multi-site churches for the last eight years of my career. Talking to as many church planters & pastors as we have has given us insight into the common challenges, fears and victories of church leaders with a passion for church planting, evangelism and changing the world.

We wanted to gather story narratives from church planters, leaders, pastors and coaches and put them in one place for you, the new church planter. We asked each contributor to share their stories by answering this question *What I Wish I Knew...*

As you read these next pages with insight from everything on financial matters to church growth to leadership to personal development, we encourage you to read these first-hand accounts with an open mind. They have something to share with you -- and that something could be paradigm-shifting, spirit-lifting or even church-changing.

God Bless,

- The Portable Church Team

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OUR PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH PLANTER >

“Praise to You, O Lord, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is Yours.

(Adapted) O Lord our God, we come to You on behalf of those we have worked with and are in relationship with, and on behalf of those we don't yet know.

“Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; You are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from You; You are the ruler of all things. In Your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give You thanks and praise Your glorious name. *I Chronicles 29: 10 – 13*

We know that everything comes from You, we thank You for the abundance that You have provided for building a temple for your Holy Name. May we, and those with whom we labor, always remember that which You have provided belongs to You.

We know, Lord, that the hearts of those that dare to follow You, that dare to move others to follow You, shall be tested. Lord, may You be pleased with their integrity. May they have relationships and community in their lives that spurs them towards honor, that challenges them to sacrifice.

We have seen, with great joy, how willingly these pastors have given to you. We beseech You, Lord, to keep this desire of sacrifice, of integrity and of willingness in the hearts of your people forever. May You keep their hearts loyal to You. May You give them the wholehearted devotion to keep Your commands, requirements and decrees. (Adapted from I Chronicles 16-19)



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YOUR PLANS VS. > GOD'S PLANS

by Mark Lee

It was the second year of our brand new church and I was convinced that God was telling me something – it's time to quit the ministry. Never had an affair. Didn't steal anything from the church. Relationship with the family was going great. I was tired and I didn't know how to distinguish God's voice from my own fatigue anymore.

I was convinced that I was the problem and it was time for me to quit. Now before I end up depressing you, let me take you back a couple years.

We had a dream to plant in an area that was known to kill churches. Churches and businesses alike saw the promise of a brand new, growing community in Southern California and envisioned a gold mine of growth. It was big. It was new. It was beautiful. The sales people were prettier than the showrooms, and they all assured you that you didn't even need a down payment to buy a house. Perfect!

However, when you looked beyond the nicely manicured lawns you found that churches were non-existent. They opened. They closed. Few survived and fewer thrived.

When we started VantagePoint Church, God's favor was evident. Preview service #1 – 220 people. Grand Opening – #350 people. Easter #1 – 414 people. Fall Series Kickoff – 611 people. We even grew during our first summer (*I was convinced it was only a matter of time before publishers came knocking for a book on how to grow a church during the summer!*)

I was on a high every time we broke a new barrier, but there was never time to celebrate because we were too busy moving forward. When I preached, people laughed, cried and raised their hands, so I never left the pulpit. I preached nearly every week for 2 years.

Then we moved facilities. Everything about it just made sense. It was a gorgeous, 550 seat performing arts center with a million lighting cans and a couple spotlights that we simply referred to as "Shekinah."

Unfortunately, that's when people started leaving. The church "felt different" they said. The same faces were reporting for duty & looking frayed. When a friend told me that I wasn't the same guy I used to be, I began to wonder, "maybe I made a mistake."

We started sounding five-alarm fires when we were just going through normal growing pains. The church didn't even level out; we just weren't growing the way I had planned...and that was the struggle.

My plan vs. His plan. My fame vs. God's fame. My expectations vs. God's expectations. Instead of focusing on my own faithfulness to God, my spiritual report card was always tied to a number that could never be high enough. If we could only reach 250, I'd be happy. Then 250 became 500. 500 became 750.

Happiness was a mirage that was always 250 people beyond my grasp.

I never stopped to see the hidden blessings of life change all around me. Marriages were being healed. Addictions were being overcome. We were adorning the gospel through the way we loved our community. I've come to realize that I may never be pursued to write that book, but I'm (finally) okay with that.



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YOUR LAUNCH TEAM > VS. YOUR CORE TEAM

by Dr. Tom Nebel

When my wife and I planted a church (more than twenty-five years ago!) I wish I had known the difference between a launch team and a core group. If I had, I think I would have been more strategic in the deployment of our people, and I would have been more emotionally prepared to handle the eventual fallout that would come.

We called them “core groups” in those days. They consisted of any combination of people who hung around until the new church started services. Some were full born participants, others took up space. Some were completely in line with the vision of the new church, others were either passively-aggressive or significantly uninformed. And our first mistake was calling them a “core group”. Using that moniker implied that this conglomerate of people were at the center of any future decision-making or activity of the church. It meant that they were the architects of the vision and values of the emerging congregation. At least it sounded like that.

Core groups are hard to break apart smoothly. It is inevitable (and by that I mean INEVITABLE) that much angst will come to the core and to the leader someday. Once the church starts public services and the project doesn't end up looking like some may have imagined, push-back and fallout become painful.

How much better it would have been to call that gathering a “launch team”? Implied here is that those who gather are committed to one central cause: get the church incubated to the point where it could

have a weekly public worship service. Launch teams are not architects of the vision and values (though, certainly, they can participate at the church planter's request). Instead, launch teams are task-oriented. They work to fulfill the task. Once the task is fulfilled the launch team goes away.

SOME LAUNCH TEAM PARTICIPANTS WILL GO AWAY. SOME BY DESIGN, SOME BY ROUTINE FALLOUT. BUT IT WON'T HURT AS MUCH, AND THEY CAN LEAVE WITH DIGNITY.

One church planter I know and admire understood this distinction very well, and he did something very unique. Following the launch of the church, he gathered the team one last time...at a funeral home! There they brought their greatest memories of the launch process in written form, and participants placed those memories in a time capsule, which was to be opened when the new church's first daughter church would one day be launched. In turn, the church planter gave each launch team participant a hand-made serving tray, as a gift of thanks but also as a reminder of what they were all along called to do: serve. Most of them stayed with the church, some eventually in leadership positions. They've had an amazingly rich history together.



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WHEN DISAPPOINTMENT COMES



by Alex Absalom

Disappointment will come. That doesn't sound very cheery, does it?! However, as my wife Hannah and I talked about this topic, we remembered that was one of the main things we hadn't expected.

In every church that we have led, whether a plant or an existing church, we have experienced being hurt and let down by others. I am not talking about the crazies or those that are undependable or those on the fringe. To be honest, being let down by certain types of people is fully expected and, thus, is easy to brush off.

The people I'm talking about being let down by are those closest to you and your family; those you love; those you respect and admire. The people whom you dream with about the potential for your church, but three months later they suddenly announce they are leaving for the church down the road; or, perhaps, one day a switch flips, and they fight you tooth and nail on a key area of your vision; or, maybe, they betray your trust and share what you thought were private conversations. These disappointments might come from a member of the staff you personally hired or the one who hired you. Maybe these upsets come from the ones you thought were your best friends in the congregation.

When these upsets happen, it is deeply painful. It may feel as though you've been thoroughly betrayed. If you are in church leadership - this will happen. Multiple Times.

There's a number of things we can do in these situations and, thankfully, God's Word provides a roadmap for how to handle disappointment.

REMAIN OPEN.

That's right. Open. We cannot withdraw or have

high barriers to others. This does not model good discipleship, and it certainly won't be healthy for you and your family. It will feel like everyone has deserted you, and you will be tempted to close down relationally. Just remind yourself, "Silly, silly idea. Don't do that!"

REMEMBER TRUTH.

For every one person who lets you down, there will be a hundred who don't!

REALIZE THE BIG PICTURE.

This is a moment to define your leadership. You can't control others and their behavior, but you can control your response.

FIX YOUR EYES ON GOD.

He is the one person who is not going to let you down. That's why Paul describes Him as "the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles" (2 Corinthians 1). He is really good at dishing out comfort, so let Him do that.

MOURN THE RELATIONSHIP.

Do this in order to move on. Sometimes, all it takes is a fireside glass of wine with your spouse or with a good friend that evening. In other situations you will find that, for many months, you will have to intentionally turn to God whenever you think about the people who have hurt you. You have to hand your feelings back to Him. Ecclesiastes says there is a time to mourn and a time to laugh. Sometimes you may even find yourself doing them both at the same time.

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH MATURE CHRISTIANS.

Proverbs 13:12 tells us that "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life." It is when you've been wounded that you are most vulnerable. At such a time, you need mature

WHEN DISAPPOINTMENT COMES



Absalom, (cont.)

Christians to surround you. This is not the occasion to pour out your heart to non-Christians or immature Christians (however lovely they are), because you need Spirit-led healing.

You need to draw on your mature Christian friend's strong faith in Christ and the power of the cross and resurrection. If you try to heal your heart with wisdom of the world, then you have put something else in the place of the Gospel. Only Jesus brings healing, and you need Him to be totally setting the agenda and pace for your healing. If you don't go this route, you will open a doorway to a root of bitterness being planted in your heart.

PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN.

If you have children, do not do your therapy with them. You can NOT process it with them. It is not fair to them, because they are not mature enough to respond appropriately. So many pastor's kids fall away from following Jesus because of how they have seen their parents being treated by people who claim to be acting in the name of Christ.

They are further hurt by an astonishing lack of wisdom by hurting parents. Don't let this happen in your family - you can control how and what you process. In fact, stick one in the eye of Satan by turning this into a positive learning experience for your children, as they observe how a Jesus follower works through grief and loss in a Christ-honoring manner.

They may already be well aware of things happening, and you can address that appropriately. You can say, "This is a tough time and sadness is a part of life, and yet God is good and loves us all very much, and this is a time to really pray and worship Him".

Let your children see you doing those things! Say, "These people are still Christians and we can pray for

them and not say mean things about them."

Then pray! Remind your children how many amazing Christians they still know, and how it is still such an incredible privilege to be a leader in God's church! Turn this into a powerful faith lesson that ultimately builds their trust in God.

LEARN WHAT YOU NEED & MOVE ON.

The time will come when the initial sting has died down and you can look back and see what lessons you need to learn. Was there some reality, perhaps about your leadership style, in the midst of the accusation? Even the poorest chicken can find a grain of wheat in a dung pile. What element of truth is there? Look for it, even if it is deep down and the other party expressed it totally inappropriately. Allow God to use this experience to train and mature you as a leader.

**WE HAVE THIS TREASURE IN
JARS OF CLAY TO SHOW THAT
THIS ALL-SURPASSING POWER IS
FROM GOD AND NOT FROM US.
(2 CORINTHIANS 4:7).**



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FOUR CORE PROCESSES TO GROW YOUR CHURCH >

by Bill Easum

When I restarted the church I pastored for 24 years, I wish I had known that only four ministries grow a church and its people. That's right. Only four things! If our churches have all four of these ministries hitting on all four cylinders, it can't help but grow.

- 1** We have to reach people where they are and bring them into the church circle.
- 2** We have to retain them once they show up.
- 3** We have to disciple them so that their lives imitate that of Jesus.
- 4** We have to send them back out to start the process all over again.

These ministries are shaped by the overall mission of the church. For them to reach their potential growth quotient, the church needs an agreed upon mission on which to build these four ministries.



Over the years, we developed the following list of questions to ask every time we evaluated our ministry. Here they are....

What does our church do to invite people to worship?

What do our people do to invite people to worship?

How much time do we spend in the community to establish relationships and discover the key to the community?



Do we have more people commissioned to work in the community than work in the church?

Do we know where God is working in our city? And if so, what are we doing to connect with it?

Do we know how many of our first time visitors return? How many are with us a year later?

How long does it take us to respond to the first time visitor? Is it a personal response?

Is our worship indigenous to the community? Indigenous means worship is in the language, technology, and culture of the surrounding community.

Do we have enough small groups to retain and disciple people? Are they bible studies or life sharing, missional communities?

Do we have a discipling process in place? Does it resemble a farm system?

Is our church a “sent church?”

Do we train our people that ministry is sharing their faith with their networks rather than sitting on a committee?

Which of the four core processes is weak in our church and what might be some things we can do to improve them?



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PURSUE EVERYONE > WITH PASSION.

by Ron Edmondson

When we started Grace Community Church we were shy about church people.

We started Grace, as most church planters do, to reach people who weren't attending church. We had a heart for the lost more than we had a heart for the saved. It wasn't that we didn't love church people, but they weren't part of our mission God had called us to do.

If a person showed up who regularly attended another local church, we didn't go overboard to reach out to them. We weren't rude to them, but we really didn't pursue them as passionately we did other visitors.

This practice was also partially out of respect for other churches. Church planters can be very unpopular with local churches who fear losing church members for something new. We wanted to avoid that tension as much as we could.

In the process, we unintentionally hurt some people.

Many times we thought we were doing this for all the right reasons. We wanted to respect our vision and honor other churches. We realized this was actually standing in the way of something God was doing in another person's life. Just as we were being called to something new, and to different groups of people than we had previously ministered, others were also. We stood in the way of that calling.

At the same time, we suffered from a leadership void during the early years of the church. We had very few people who had ever done ministry. People we were reaching weren't yet in the habit of attending church every week. They didn't bring their checkbooks either. We didn't have enough people ready to lead in a church setting who already knew what it was like to be fully invested in a church.

What would I do differently today? I'd still be focused on reaching hurting, lost, and unchurched people, but I would never shy away from the people God may be sending to help the vision He has given me. It's good for their personal walk and our public vision.



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THREE PRINCIPLES > FOR FUNDING YOUR CHURCH PLANT

by Casey Graham

You have a God-given mission and a bold vision. You've carefully crafted your core values. The website is live and the wheels are in motion.

As a communicator, you've definitely thought through the first teaching series, but you're worried about how to pay for all of "the stuff." As a catalytic leader, you've gathered a core team, but you're not sure how to raise the money you need to serve your community.

Funding the church plant can be one of the most difficult parts of the process, because it's not something that comes natural to a lot of planters. Jesus had donors who supported his ministry as well as a system to manage the money. The principle is true today: Ministry takes money.

Here are three principles you must embrace if you want to fully fund the vision God has given you:

FUNDING THE CHURCH IS YOUR JOB.

Preaching, planning services, serving the community, organizing outreach events, and having conversations over coffee might seem more fun, but someone has got to fund the vision. And here is the reality: YOU are the someone. Even as your team grows, you will not be able to delegate ultimate financial

responsibility. Bookkeepers, administrators and Executive Pastors may join your staff, but you will never outgrow the role of CFO – Chief Fundraising Officer. Don't resign yourself to this fact; relish the opportunity to steward the resources God has given you. Don't make the mistake of thinking that funding the vision isn't spiritual or important.

MAKE IT NORMAL TO TALK ABOUT MONEY.

We talk to too many pastors who are afraid to talk about money and apologetically teach God's Word on the issue. They are scared of offending seekers or running off key contributors. But the issue isn't talking about money, it's HOW you talk about money. Unchurched people aren't dumb – they know it takes money to run a church. And deep down, people WANT to be a part of something. When you paint a compelling picture and clearly ask for participation, they will respond. Don't wait until you've got services and lots of people to teach on

money – get your core team involved in generosity.

If you don't have a generous core team, you won't magically have a generous church.

YOU NEED A FUNDING PLAN IN ADDITION TO A SPENDING PLAN.

Churches are good at developing budgets, coding expenses and counting the dollars, but you don't just need dollar counters, you need dollar creators. A budget is great, but what about writing a plan to GET the dollars you will spend? As a church planter, don't just plan services and outreach events – create an annual funding plan that builds intentional systems into following up with donors, emphasizing digital giving, discipling high-capacity givers, talking about money during your services and more.

Helping churches develop a funding plan is the core mission of Giving Rocket.

Learn more at givingrocket.com.



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OVERCOMING PITFALLS > IN FUNDRAISING

by Doug Foltz

When I planted a church I was ready to take on the world, but my take all attitude dipped when I started fund raising. Fund raising is hard and is something many church planters are ill-equipped to accomplish. Why is this?

Planning Poorly. Church planters will make a list of contacts, send out a letter and wait for the money to pour in. That never works. NEVER!!! Fund raising is relational. A good fund raising plan includes letters, but it should also include personal visits, phone calls, follow up, etc.

Misjudging the Timing of Funds. Most individuals can give today, but churches are different because they have lengthy support processes. The money may come in later than you expect.

Underestimating the Importance of Margin. Commitments do not equal cash in hand. You will have commitments made that won't come. Allow for margin in your spending.

Feeling the Effects of Rejection. You have to have thick skin. You'll leave messages and send emails that will go unanswered from friends. It's easy to get depressed over the rejection.

Undervaluing the Spiritual Impact on the Giver. It's easy to approach fund raising as if you are asking for a favor, but you need to see it as if you are presenting the giver with an opportunity to partner with what God is doing.

Stressing About the Budget. There will be times when you don't know how the bills will be paid. Take it as an opportunity to grow closer to God. What we worry about reveals where we aren't yet trusting Him.

Now that we've talked about what hinders us in fund-raising, let's talk about ways to make the process easier.

BE REALISTIC. Talk to other church planters about fund raising. Knowing what to expect will help.

DEVELOP A PLAN. You wouldn't show a video with poor quality during a worship service or print a bulletin with no images on it. Take pride in your plan and how it looks.

DON'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER. Develop the attitude that no means not yet. Keep rephrasing the ask until they say yes.

BE RELATIONAL. A letter alone is not relational. Neither is doing whatever it takes to get a check. Build a relationship that's mutually beneficial.

FOCUS ON GETTING EARLY WINS. Everyone likes to support a winning team. Get on the ground and start building a team. Early momentum will translate into more funds. Build your launch team, baptize people, serve the community, start house churches or small groups. Do something to get early wins.

RAISE FUNDS FROM YOUR LOCAL TEAM. 100% of the people on your team should be giving. It speaks volumes to potential supporters. The goal is to be self-supporting, so start laying the ground work now. A local team that gives well is worth much more than a supporting church.

DON'T GIVE UP. Persevere and be bold in your ask.



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PLANT CHURCHES > FOR ALL PEOPLE

by Dr. Mark DeYmaz

For eighteen years, I served as a full-time youth pastor in a variety of homogeneous church contexts. Frankly, I never thought much about the lack of ethnic and economic diversity within these congregations: who we were, who we were not, or who we might have become if we had not been segregated by race and class distinctions.

That's right; I said it.

THE CHURCHES I SERVED DURING THOSE YEARS WERE SYSTEMICALLY SEGREGATED.

Sure, each in its own way sought to build bridges to the community, to people who were in one way or another different than us, and living within relatively close proximity to the church. At no time, however, could it be said "we were the community." Years later, I recognize that the nuance is significant and one that can no longer be ignored by churches hoping to present a credible witness of Christ-like love for all people in an increasingly diverse and cynical society.

Such revelations should come as no surprise to anyone familiar with churches throughout North America. According to the latest research, 92.5% of churches in the United States are racially segregated¹. In fact, churches today are ten times more segregated than the neighborhoods in which they sit, and twenty times more segregated than nearby public schools.²

DOES THIS CONCERN YOU? What's more shocking is that America is actually becoming more diverse, while the church remains consistently segregated. According to the latest census figures, the United States is evolving into a multicultural nation where no single race or ethnicity represents a numeric majority.³

So what are the unintended consequences of homogeneous churches? According to sociologist Michael Emerson, author of the book, *Divided By Faith*, homogenous churches forward the following precepts:

- Reproduce Inequality
- Encourage Oppression
- Strengthen Racial Division
- Heighten Political Separation⁴

Don't believe it? Consider just one example to support these claims - churches with a median income of more than \$60,000 a year grew by 17.6% between 2000 and 2009 while churches with a median income of under \$30,000 declined by 4.3%.⁵

Surely it breaks the heart of God that so many churches are established by race and class; that little has changed in the more than one hundred years since it was first observed that eleven o'clock on Sunday morning is the most segregated hour of the week.⁶

BROTHERS AND SISTERS, IT SHOULD NOT BE SO!

PLANT CHURCHES > FOR ALL PEOPLE

(DeYmaz, cont.)

The evidence confirms what human observation indicates: local churches in the United States are systemically segregated; or, to put it more bluntly, institutional racism has become a presumptive reality in the local church today—an unintended consequence of the widespread propagation of what is known as the Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP).⁷

According to the principle's progenitor, Donald McGavran, the HUP recognizes that "[People] like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic or class barriers". For decades, this principle has been promoted as something more: the modus operandi for those who would plant, grow or develop a successful church. The question we should ask, however, is this: Is the Homogeneous Unit Principle biblical?

Undeniably, churches do grow fastest when they're homogeneous.

THE QUESTION REMAINS: IS THIS GOD'S WILL AND BEST FOR THE CHURCH?

I do not think so; and therefore encourage anyone planting a church to do so in line with New Testament thinking on the subject, and not according to the conventional wisdom of Man.



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FOOTNOTES

1. See Curtiss Paul DeYoung, Michael O. Emerson, George Yancey, and Karen Chai Kim, *United by Faith: The Multiracial Congregation as an Answer to the Problem of Race* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003). The authors cite Mark Chavez, "National Congregations Study" (Tucson, Ariz.: University of Arizona Department of Sociology, 1999). The remaining churches (7.5 percent) can be described as multiracial churches, in which there is a non-majority, collective population of at least 20 percent. By this definition, approximately 12 percent of Catholic churches, just less than 5 percent of evangelical churches, and about 2.5 percent of mainline Protestant churches can be described currently as multiethnic or multi-racial.

2. Statistics presented by Dr. Michael O. Emerson at the National Multi-ethnic Church Conference in San Diego, CA, November 2-3, 2011. A complete video of his presentation is available to members of the Mosaix Global Network. See mosaix.info/membership-benefits for further details.

3. See noticias.aollatino.com/2011/03/22/census-2010-results-hispanicpopulation, accessed 25 March, 2011.

4. Emerson's conclusions were cited by David T. Olsen in a presentation delivered at the National Multi-ethnic Church Conference in San Diego, CA, November 2-3, 2011. A complete video of his presentation is available to members of the Mosaix Global Network. See mosaix.info/membership-benefits for further details.

5. Statistics presented by David T. Olsen at the National Multi-ethnic Church Conference in San Diego, CA, November 2-3, 2011. A complete video of his presentation is available to members of the Mosaix Global Network.

6. Mark DeYmaz: *Building a Healthy Multi-ethnic Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Leadership Network, 2007), p. 186, where the author states, "As to when and by whom this sentiment was first observed, religious scholar Martin Marty noted at the end of the nineteenth century, 'White Protestants, however, did little to build bonds with [Black Protestant] churches, and racially there were at least two Americas or Christianities. Doctrinal and practical similarity counted for little. ... Critics noted that the Sunday Protestant worship hour was the most segregated time of the week. Indeed, the once righteous churches of the North, after proclaiming triumph over the evils of slavery and the South, came during the next century to adopt southern styles of regard for Blacks and their churches, and there was little positive contact even within denominational families' (John McManners, ed. *The Oxford History of Christianity* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990], 423).

7. I am using the term as colloquially defined at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Institutional_racism, accessed 25 March, 2011, which reads, "Institutional racism (also called structural or systemic racism) describes any kind of system of inequality based on race. It can occur in institutions such as public government bodies, private business corporations (such as media outlets), and universities (public and private). The term was coined by Black Power activist Stokely Carmichael in the late 1960s. The definition given by William Macpherson within the report looking into the death of Stephen Lawrence was 'the collective failure of an organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their color, culture, or ethnic origin,' Jones, J. M. (1997) *Prejudice and Racism* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill."

FOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR CHURCH PLANTERS

by Jeff Harris

There are many things I wish I had known when I started out. Here are four of them I want to share with you, the New Church Planter.

LIKE AN EPISODE OF LOST, YOU CAN'T GET OFF THE ISLAND.

You're not supposed to! It's lonely at the top and, in spite of our current emphasis on intimacy, leadership is lonely. Biblical leadership is especially lonely. Just ask Abraham, Joseph, Jonah, David, Jesus (can anyone say Gethsemane) Paul or John, exiled on the island of Patmos. False expectations create painful disappointment. We need to learn to expect seasons of loneliness and feelings of isolation. Embrace these times without despair. Realize you are never truly alone... you are invited to greater intimacy.

EVERY DAY WITH JESUS CAN BE HARDER THAN THE DAY BEFORE.

The faith journey is about trials, perseverance and endurance. We all have Seasons but we also are on an ascending journey. This ascending journey hardens and strengthens us. As you get closer to the tree line, as oxygen is depleted, as the grade steepens, you become ready. You can't please God apart from Faith.

Your journey may be like that

of Abraham – reckoned as Righteousness (Genesis 15), then circumcised (Genesis 17), then asked to sacrifice your only son (Genesis 22). As we learn in Second Timothy, we've got to fight the good fight! Again, we must guard ourselves from the expectation of "easy". This expectation is the enemy's playground. Cling to 2 Samuel 11:1 "In the Spring when Kings go out to war...but David stayed in Jerusalem". If you're not being stretched you will soon be sifted.

JESUS' BRIDE IS THE CHURCH. SHE'S NOT YOURS.

A wife, four kids and a thriving ministry is a recipe for trouble. As two of my kids have enter their teenage years, there is less and less margin and more and more gravitational pull toward the poles. My wife's pull is the welfare and management of House and providing an ongoing shuttle service. My pull is the leading and advancing a large team with a complex mission. Holding these in balance grows increasingly harder over time.

You begin to see how people build separate lives, you begin to see how you could be ready for your kids to launch out on their

own. More than ever, you must fight for family unity, relationship intimacy and teamwork over all else. Learning more about your wife, loving her and fighting the drift toward busy-ness that divides is the first step in fulfilling your calling. If you fail her then you run the risk of disqualification. Even with a thriving ministry, get back to the basics of love.

SUCCESS MEANS SUCCESSION.

When Jesus left, the movement thrived. When Paul died, he had planted numerous churches and raised up the next generation of leaders. Today's churches don't outlive strong leadership because investment is not made, the young are not empowered with significant responsibility so they don't grow at the speed of the organization and transitions don't occur early enough. Drew Bledsoe thought he had more game left when Tom Brady took over. Don't let that be your story. Identify your replacement. Give your ministry life, long after yours is done.

Keep these four tips in mind as you embark on your church planting journey.

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AVOID THE MY CHURCH MENTALITY



by Jason C. Dukes

As you cultivate for a new local church expression, what if you went into it asking, "How will we cultivate for one new expression while ultimately cultivating for oneness among the many local church expressions in town?"

If you don't include this question in the shaping of your vision, then you are not in line with how Jesus envisioned His church. He prayed that His followers would be unified around mission in John 17:18-23.

In Jesus' prayer there, He declared that He was giving a mission to His followers just as He was given a mission (18). The Sent One now sends us (John 20:21). As we unite to live sent, people will believe in the One who was sent.

Jesus also prayed that He was being set apart (consecrated) in order to set apart His followers to be involved in this mission of God. The implication is that anything less than this ideal of unity is less than what He intended through these consecration efforts.

Do you sincerely think that Jesus hung on a cross with the dream of a redeemed church that involved isolated, consumer-driven, non-profit organizations? *Me either.*

Jesus then declared the goal for His followers "... to become one heart and mind." It's as though our oneness with God is seen by the world via our oneness with each other (read 1st John).

Jesus next prayed, "The same glory You gave me, I gave them." When the Scriptures refer to the glory of God, the reference is always about the revealed presence of God among us. Jesus then specified what that revealed presence would look like AND what the ultimate impact would be.

Then they'll be mature in this oneness, and give the

godless world evidence that You've sent me and loved them in the same way You've loved me (23).

That revealed presence will be demonstrated through the unity of His followers, ultimately resulting in people believing that the One who was sent actually loved the world (John 3:16). Jesus' prayer indicates that the work of God will not come alive among us without unity, since people actually believing that God sent Jesus is the work of God (John 6:29).

The conclusion is the work of God comes alive among us through the Holy-Spirit enabled unity of a typically selfish, divisive, my-agenda-seeking people around a selfless, reconciling, restorative, His-Kingdom-seeking mission on which we've been invited by a loving, near, sanctifying Savior.

Many expressions of His church is a good thing. Based upon His prayer in the Garden, Jesus wants people involved in those many expressions of His church to actually follow Him, having been reconciled for a unity of purpose and mission TOGETHER (read 2nd Corinthians 5:14-21).

No more of this MY church stuff. It's not my church. It's not your church. She (the bride of Christ) is His church. As we cultivate for new expressions, may we surrender the success of "MY One Church" mentality and instead live as an answer to the prayer of Jesus. It's what He intended.

You can read more about this topic in the book *Beyond MY Church*.



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LESSONS LEARNED > IN THE FIELDS

by Neil Cole

If I were to start church planting again, knowing what I know now, what would I do differently?

BEGIN IN THE HARVEST AND START SMALL. Don't start with a team of already saved Christians. We think that having a bigger and better team will accelerate the work, and it doesn't. In fact, it has the opposite effect. It is better to have a team of two, and the right two makes the work even better: and apostle and prophet together will lay the foundation of a movement. The churches birthed out of transformed lives are healthier, reproductive and growing faster. It is about this- a life changed, not about the model. Never forget that!

ALLOW GOD TO BUILD AROUND OTHERS. Don't start in your own home...find a person of peace and start in their home! Read Matthew 10/Luke 10...and do it!

EMPOWER OTHERS FROM THE START. Don't lead too much...let the new believers do the work of the ministry without your imposed control. Let the excitement of a new life carry the movement rather than your intelligence and persuasiveness.

LET SCRIPTURE LEAD NOT YOUR ASSUMPTIONS. Question all your ministry assumptions in light of Scripture with courage and faith. There is nothing sacred but God's Word and Spirit in us...let them lead rather than your own experience, teachings, and tradition.

RETHINK LEADERSHIP The Christian life is a process. There is not a ceiling of maturity that people need to break through to lead. Set them loose immediately and walk with them through the process for a while. Leadership recruitment is a dead end. We are all recruiting from the same pond and it is getting shallower and shallower. Leadership farming is what is needed.

Any leadership development system that doesn't start with the lost is starting in the wrong place. Start at the beginning and begin with the end in mind. Mentor life on life and walk with them through their growth in being, doing and knowing. The end is not an accumulated knowledge but a life of obedience that will be willing to die for Jesus. The process isn't over until there is a flat-line on the screen next to their bed.

IMMEDIATE OBEDIENCE IN BAPTISM. Baptize quickly and publicly and let the one doing the evangelizing do the baptizing. The Bible doesn't command us to be baptized, but to be baptizers. It is absolutely foolish the way we hold the Great Commission over our people and then exclude them from obeying it at the same time! We need to let the new convert depend upon the Lord for protection, provision, training and leading, rather than upon men.

SETTLE "YOUR" OWNERSHIP ISSUES. Stop being concerned about whether "Your" church plant will succeed or not. It isn't "yours" in the first place. Your reputation is not the one on the line... Jesus' is. He will do a good job if we let him. If we have our own identity and reputation at stake in the work we will tend to take command. Big mistake. Let Jesus get the glory and put his reputation on the line...He can take care of Himself without your help!"

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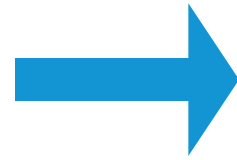
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HOW TO LEAD YOURSELF EVERYDAY



by Dave Ferguson



The hardest and often the last leadership lesson that most of us learn is self-leadership.

My good friend Bob Bower was having lunch with the campus pastor of COMMUNITY recently when he said, "Everyday at the top of my journal I write these three letters: E (emotional), P (physical) and S (spiritual) and then give myself a 1-10 rating." He said this daily routine keeps him in a healthy place.

I was inspired to do the same, using our RPMs tool that is a regular part of our coaching of leaders at COMMUNITY (see page 120 of *Exponential: How You and Your Friends Can Start a Missional Church Movement*), based on Luke 2:52 "Jesus grew in wisdom (mental) and stature (physical), and in favor with God (spiritual) and men (relational)."

Daily, for the last month, I have put at the top of my journal these four letters: R (relational), P (physical), M (mental) and S (spiritual) and given myself a 1-10 rating. I am already convinced that using this tool on a daily basis, rather than just during coaching sessions, may be one of the most powerful self leadership tools around. Here's how it works...

RELATIONAL. Our relational world typically includes the people with whom we interact on a regular basis: our immediate family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and small group members. Here are some questions to ask yourself.

- How are my relationships at home?
- What about my marriage, dating, or family life is going well? What's not going so well?
- What would I like to change?
- Who do I consider my closest friend? How is God using that relationship to grow me?
- What are my relationships at work like?
- Which of my relationships give me energy and life? Which are the most challenging or draining?

PHYSICAL. Our physical well-being is often the most overlooked aspect of a leader's life. Diet, exercise, sleep and rest are all vital to our ability to lead effectively. We have to take our physical well-being seriously. Here are some good questions to ask:

- Am I getting enough rest?
- How is my current energy level?
- What am I doing to maintain good health? Is there anything about my physical health that I'd like to change?

MENTAL. In order for us to stay sharp and be lifelong learners, we need to develop our minds. Here are some questions we can ask:

- What have I been learning lately? How am I applying what I am learning?
- What magazines, books, or websites do I read or access?
- What thoughts have been dominating my mind? Are they drawing me closer to God? Are they pulling me away from him?

SPIRITUAL. It is also imperative that we discover and act on whatever helps us grow deeper in our relationship with Jesus. Here are some questions we can ask to see how we are developing spiritually:

- How would I describe my relationship with Christ right now?
- What does it look like when I am feeling closely connected to God?
- Which spiritual disciplines seem to help me draw closer to Jesus? Prayer? Journaling? Worship? Solitude?
- Who is holding me accountable to practicing these disciplines?
- What has God been saying to me lately through his Word? The Holy Spirit? Other Christ followers? Prayer?

The longer I am in leadership, the more I know that the most important leadership we can offer is self leadership. *Use this tool everyday and lead yourself!*



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FIND YOUR IDENTITY IN CHRIST



by Jason Gerdes

My identity in Christ is based upon receiving and not achieving. It might seem like an obvious statement, but it wasn't always obvious to me when I first started out.

As a pastor, I am wired up to achieve and lead into the future. This is a great thing and one I think is very important.

When it comes to my identity, however, it is vital to understand that it is not something that is achieved. Rather, it is something to be received.

THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY IS BASED UPON THE FINISHED WORK OF JESUS AND NOT ON MY UNFINISHED WORK.

It is so easy to connect who I am to how things are going in ministry. Most pastors don't know how to simply be a Christian without being in ministry. We have learned how to achieve but have not really learned how to receive.

Romans 5:17 states: *"For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!"*

In order to lead a church, we must have an attitude of achieving or we will not work hard. However, to be a Christian, we must have an attitude of receiving or else we will not grow in grace. In that passage, Paul states those who receive God's grace will reign in life through Jesus.

THE KEY TO LEADING IS FIRST RECEIVING GRACE. It is truly detrimental to our souls and ultimately the church when we as pastors and leaders focus so much on achieving versus receiving.

You may be thinking "Yeah I got this, what I need to know is how to grow my church." I would challenge, why are you consumed with church growth? Do you need to validate your existence?

Jesus said that He would build His church. Why are you so worried?

Early on, I found myself tying my significance to how the church was going. If attendance was up then I was up, but if attendance was down then I was down. I started to notice this was very unhealthy as it was killing my soul.

It was then, the Holy Spirit showed me that the problem was my identity was based on what I was doing instead of what Jesus had done.

Don't get me wrong; I want the church to grow because I want people to meet Jesus. What I don't want is to lose my soul in the process. The only way that won't happen is if I am more concerned with receiving grace than achieving success.

Ask yourself this question to test yourself: Are you okay with just being a Christian or do you need to be a leader? It is okay to want to make a difference but detrimental to *need* that identity.

START EVERY DAY RECEIVING GRACE IN ORDER TO MEET YOUR NEEDS AND THEN MOVE OUT INTO LEADING THE CHURCH.



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FIVE WAYS TO BUILD AN EMPOWERED TEAM



by Brian Koehn

Every Monday morning, our team meets to review the previous week and plan for the next one. One of the highlights of these meetings is a recap of any Portable Church® trainings that happened over the weekend. In the retelling of the weekend stories, I've noticed that the most effective churches have figured out how to transfer ownership effectively.

As a result, their churches consist of excited volunteers, led by empowering leaders. Here's how we can transfer ownership and create partners in our vision.

CAST THE VISION. This step gets a lot of press in the church world. We all know that without a vision, the people perish (Prov. 29:18). A vision needs to be communicated. It needs to be clear and compelling. Churches involved in God's Work of Redemption inherently have visions that are incredibly compelling. When each team's role is clearly connected to the core vision of the church, their visions become compelling as well. "We are going to set up in 45 minutes or less." "Our setup teams will have plenty of energy left over to be engaged with the service and present to visitors." "Our worship space will point people to God."

SET THE BOUNDARIES. If you are going to turn responsibilities over to leaders and volunteers, you need to be clear on where you end and they begin. For example, "This is your baby now." "You care more about sound quality than I do." "That is why you are the right person for this job, not me!"

This step is so critical, and it is where many of us fail. It is so important not to violate the boundary that you've set. Don't nag. Don't control. Don't micromanage. Those mistakes will destroy a sense of ownership. Once you have agreed on the mechanisms of accountability, you can hold people accountable without violating their boundaries.

PROVIDE RESOURCES. Make sure that delegation comes with the resources necessary to get the job done. This includes training, equipment, time and money. It can also include processes and access to key people. You can offer to help, as long as it's clear that you are not the boss when you step into the other person's area of responsibility. This step is particularly important early on when the risk of discouragement is high and a person may not know or even just trust that certain resources are available.

ALLOW FAILURE. Here is where most leaders fail when it comes to transferring ownership. Perhaps we never really wanted to give up control. Perhaps our low self-esteem demands that we jump back in to prove that we do it best. Perhaps failure avoidance is more important to us than healthy delegation. Perhaps we fail to recognize failure for what it is. It is the last step in a successful transfer of ownership. Perfectionists don't lead empowered teams. Failure is part of the process. Expect it. How you handle it will cement or destroy the sense of ownership that a person has for their area of responsibility.

ENJOY SUCCESS. There is a difference between renters and owners, between baby-sitters and parents, between stewards and heirs. Jesus talked about the difference between hired hands and shepherds (John 10). There is tremendous satisfaction in working with a team that cares as much about accomplishing the vision as you do.



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PUSH AGAINST > YOUR BIASES

by Kim D. Hammond

I was a church planter in my twenties. I knew what I didn't want. I didn't want Sunday to be the center of the experience and I didn't want to go to church, I wanted to BE the church. I loved the dreaming part of church planting. When I first started talking about it, I pictured cool worship and a funky place and lots of people listening to me.

Thankfully, as part of my church planting experience I decided to put myself through the Forge Mission Training Network in Melbourne. It changed my life as I came face to face with all my biases and default settings. I wanted to do something different. I talked about doing something different, but until I saw new things, experienced some new paradigms, and got coaching from people who challenged and stretched my thinking, I was always going to default to the old behavior.

THE TRAINING COMPLETELY MESSED WITH MY ECCLESIOLOGY, AND I'M GLAD.

I had a great biblical foundation and church upbringing that was crucial to my formation; however, I still carried baggage. For example, I believed women were co-partners in missionality, but my biases and default settings didn't allow for the culture I was dreaming about.

My wife is a great missionary. When I met and fell in love with her, she was putting herself through University to work with people with physical and intellectual disabilities. She has worked in Cambodia, changing the lives of refugees; and she's even taken my oldest son with her. Even though she has no desire to be a senior pastor or preacher, she leads nonetheless through her life, integrity and commitment to restoration and justice. Her love for people is outstanding.

Thank God my wife is allowed to live out her gifting in our church, because our church needs her.

You see, often men have to think their way into relationships; but women (like my wife) just have it within them. Whereas men may have to step into it with conscious effort, most of the missional women I know carry it to everything.

WE CANNOT SILENCE THE MISSIONAL WOMEN IN OUR CHURCHES WITHOUT SHORTCHANGING THE KINGDOM.

While this was part of my church-planting dream, if I could go back and do it again, I would empower the women in my community more from the very beginning. I wish I had not just talked about women as important, but had shown how important they were by championing them. I wish I had learned more from their natural practices and rhythms earlier.

Pushing back against our biases and defaults takes intentionality and effort. Every church planter dreams of a better expression of the church, but dreaming of a new culture is never enough to shift the tide—we must take action from day one so that the community we're building can see the dream becoming a reality.

IT'S WHEN WE LIVE OUT THE DREAM CONSISTENTLY THAT NEW CULTURE IS BORN.



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SOW & KEEP > ON SOWING

by Andrew Hawthorn

OVER THE WEEKEND, I received a phone call letting me know that Conrad had made a commitment to Christ. God is really on the move in the prisons of North West England, so one more young offender receiving Christ as Lord and Saviour was great but certainly not unusual.

The thing about Conrad, however, was that during the last 20 years of the Message Trust, he was amongst the biggest challenges our team had ever faced. Along with his fellow gang members Conrad had done more than perhaps anyone to disrupt our work. Many are the times we had to call the police as he and his chums literally trashed our venues or attacked our team.

HE STARTED TO SMOKE WEED AT AGE 10 AND WOULD THINK NOTHING OF SKINNING UP IN FRONT OF US.

Each day he would roam the streets of Wythenshawe looking for trouble and entertain himself by committing burglaries. He was tiny and malnourished for his age, and always struggled to reach the pedals of the cars he burgled.

On one occasion, we remember him threatening to remove my friend Matt's knee caps. He had taken his ball off him for bullying one of the other teenagers. None of the team thought he was not serious, so you get the picture - Conrad was not the sweetest and loveliest of young men.

Over the first 5 years of the Eden teams work in Wythenshawe, he again and again experienced a team of people who responded in the opposite spirit. They offered tough, undeserved, Jesus-style love to Conrad and his mates. So much so that when he met the same people 10 years later in prison, it was an altogether different relationship.

He's been attending every group and chapel service for the past few weeks and has experienced again

and again the presence of God. All this culminated in the phone call. The news that a repentant Conrad had given his life to Christ and was busily telling as many of his fellow prisoners as possible about what he'd done was a miracle. Conrad was offering to pray with others for their own salvation!

Here's the biblical principal that this and many thousands of other occasions have proved to me, it goes like this 'Sow and keep on sowing and at the proper time you will reap a harvest' – Galatians 6:4-10.

THIS IS A LESSON THAT CHURCH PLANTERS NEED TO LEARN, PERHAPS ABOVE ALL OTHERS.

There are undoubtedly seasons of the Spirit this side of Heaven. The same preparation, prayer, and preaching can sometimes produce absolutely nothing; yet, another time comes along and produces bumper fruit. On this roller-coaster, we learn precious lessons about utter dependence on Him.

I love the parable of the sower in Luke 4. It's not just the one with a good and noble heart who sees the outrageous one-hundred fold return but he who 'perseveres to the end'.

KEEP GOING AND DON'T GIVE UP

because at the proper time, your team will be jumping up and down with your own Conrad stories.



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TELL STORIES TO INCREASE MOMENTUM



by Kenny Jahng

“GREAT LEADERS DON’T WANT ATTENTION, BUT THEY USE IT.”

~Seth Godin, in *Tribes: We Need You To Lead Us*

Many of today’s church planters reach for a certain tool in their toolbox, but few understand the critical factors for using it in the right way. Without people in the community being aware of and talking about your ministry, the chances of making an impact and increasing attendance will surely be out of reach.

In my experience, successful ‘public relations’ depends on a keen understanding of what works regarding the second half of that phrase: relations. No one likes to meet someone that simply wants to talk about themselves all the time or resorts to superficial song and dance to attract attention. Media outlets and the local/regional community are no different. (Surprise, surprise!)

So how do you attract media attention that will allow your ministry to influence the local public dialogue while serving to witness to the community at large?

You will want to develop and share stories that consistently interest and engage your target audience. For this, there are certain types of stories that have a higher relational pull in print, video or on the web.

Here are 3 ways to do it using the T.E.D. Framework for attractional PR that I’ve developed over the years:

T = TRENDS. As a church planter, you have already been studying the economic, social and cultural lines being drawn around town. Becoming the voice that calls out what is happening without notice or emerging to become the way of the immediate future allows you to lead the discourse in the public square. Commentary and contrast articles about current issues can help to define your relevance to the community. Parenting and education issues, status of cultural arts, or economic shifts that are changing how families live are worth calling out to show how your church is being a resource, advocate or conversation partner.

E = EVENTS. Take what you’ve already planned to infuse into your ministry’s DNA and translate it into events. This can serve as an entry point which gets noticed. What community service outreach events can you announce to invite broader participation? How can you use

your already-rented venue as a place to plan something with another community organization as a partner? Can you tie-in a popular news feature to something in your church community life or preaching calendar?

D = DATA. Become the invaluable authority and resource for the community while positioning the church at the center of the public square. Carry out and publish results of surveys that clarify issues top of mind to surrounding residents. Polls are inexpensive and effective ways of becoming a trusted authority across various areas. What are residents complaining about? Find tangible data points that prove or dispel the issues at hand.

With these three basic types of stories, you can start to become noticed- not just for existing on the street corner - but for thoughtful entry into the life of the community.

Approaching local offline and online media outlets with these types of pieces or press releases doesn’t just attract attention, it harnesses it.



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FRUSTRATION BREEDS > PERSONAL GROWTH

by Matt Keller

It feels like only yesterday that we were unloading our Ryder truck in Fort Myers, FL to plant Next Level Church. We had \$9,200 and little clue what we were doing. Over the last 10 years, that dream has grown from 4 people in a coffee shop to over 2,000 in weekly attendance each weekend. In these last 3,652 days, we've learned a lot of valuable lessons that we're privileged to teach pastors, leaders and church planters across the country today. Here are three...

GOD USED THE FIRST FEW YEARS OF OUR CHURCH PLANTING JOURNEY TO DO A HUGE FOUNDATIONAL WORK IN ME.

One of the things few people understand looking at our church today is the level of low God took us to in the early years. We experienced a depth of loneliness, discouragement, hopelessness and fear like I had never felt before. I'm not sure how much of what we experienced was self-induced because of our inexperience or unrealistic expectations or ill-preparedness, and how much of it was thrust upon us from external factors.

The first two years of planting Next Level Church were the hardest, most gut-wrenching years of my entire life. We felt so alone and I, personally, felt like I was faking it every weekend.

For the first 9 months, every Sunday, I would wake to the thought that "today is going to be the day that no one shows up and we'll just pack everything back up in our 6 cars," (we didn't have a trailer back then) "and go home and do something else with our lives." God was at work in those days, molding me, humbling me laying the foundation for the ministry and influence we have today.

SLOW PROGRESS IN THE EARLY DAYS WAS IN PERFECT ALIGNMENT with what God wanted to do long term. Most church planters

are impatient, and I was no exception. I wanted our church to grow faster than it did (100 – year 1, 200 – year 2, 300 – year 4, etc.). Looking back now, I am so glad it didn't. We weren't ready. If we had seen explosive growth, it would have done damage to me, my marriage, our kids and our team. Our prayer has always been, "God find us trustworthy." After all, if He can trust us with more souls, then He will. At the end of the day, He's more in love with lost people than we are! Looking back, I can see that God gave us exactly what was right for us in that season.

MY PAIN BECAME MY PLATFORM.

As I wrote in my first book, *The Up the Middle Church*, all of the blood, sweat and tears of the early years of our church were not in vain! I am so thankful that God allowed us to take good notes and to learn from so many amazing leaders around us.

Today, God is using all that we experienced as our platform to coach hundreds of pastors across the United States through our Next Level Coaching Company and through MinistryCoach.tv.

No matter where you find yourself in the church planting journey, take heart. God's at work in you and through you laying a foundation that will one day influence others in and outside of your city.

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FOCUS IS YOUR PRIORITY



Church planters are high-energy dreamers; fidgeters with thoughts all over the place. They are bursting with passion. They are ready to charge hell with a water pistol. One thing we must do is focus this passion and energy.

More than ever before, we need to **FOCUS**. **Focus** on what God specifically charged and called us to do. **Focus** on leading and investing in people. **Focus** on developing sustainable growth. **Focus** on systems. **Focus** on processes. **Focus** on casting vision. **Focus** on disciplining. **Focus** on volunteerism. **Focus** on giving and generosity matters.

We need to **STOP** focusing on things that someone else can do for us. What?! Stop!? What is that? How can a church planter stop anything in the early days of their church? That's impossible ... right? **WRONG!**

We need to stop as much as we start. For church planters, engaged in planting a church for the first time, here are some things you can **STOP**:

- **Stop** doing administrative tasks.
- **Stop** trying to figure out payroll.
- **Stop** trying to pay your bills.
- **Stop** trying to manage cash flow.
- **Stop** adding in data in your CMS.
- **Stop** trying to develop financial reports.
- **Stop** doing your own expense reports.
- **Stop** proof-reading your own blogs.
- **Stop** returning every call, email & voice mail.
- **Stop** scheduling your own tweets.
- **Stop** scheduling your own blogs.
- **Stop** scheduling your own facebook posts.
- **Stop** booking your own meetings.

Here's the **WHY**. When we, as leaders, focus on the tasks above, **we lose focus**. I get it. You're cash poor. Being cash poor is no excuse for lack of focus. Hear me on this... in our attempts to demonstrate "good stewardship" by trying to do everything ... our "focus stewardship" and "leadership stewardship" suffers significantly.

by Bryan Miles

GOOD STEWARDSHIP IS NOT JUST ABOUT CASH. IT'S ABOUT FOCUS AND LEADERSHIP TOO.

In my role at MAG, I see this across the board. In an attempt to cut administrative costs, many have gone too far, leaving countless church pastors/leaders to arrange their own travel, file expense reports and schedule meetings. Some churches are drawn to this notion, believing this assistant-less structure represents solid leadership. Churches make these cuts because, in theory, having the church staff see the lead pastor loading paper into the copier conveys the message "we're all in this together." Not the case.

Here are some check-point questions:

- Are you doing only what God called you specifically to do in your church plant?
- What are the things you are doing today that you know anyone else could be doing for you with little-to-no training?
- Do you believe that "good stewardship" goes beyond cash? Could it mean your time, your focus and your leadership as well?

Church pastors/leaders (regardless of size of the church), we need to wake up! Generally speaking, admin work/tasks should be delegated to the lowest cost employee who can do it well. You could do the admin work, but what is accomplished by taking YOU off task? What's the potential Kingdom impact?

WE NEED TO DO WHAT GOD HAS CALLED US TO DO. WE MUST FOCUS.



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YOUR MOST CRITICAL DECISION >

by Jim Sheppard

Church planting is hard. If you're a planter, I don't need to tell you that. In terms of experience, you could tell me a lot more than I can tell you. I see a lot of planters launch churches. There are so many important decisions along the way - when you're raising initial support, when you're deciding on the launch team, when you're looking for a place to rent and so many more.

It is hard to say any one decision is more critical than another. However, from my perspective, after a church is launched and becomes viable, no decision is more critical than this one - the decision to move from temporary space to a permanent home.

SPACE AFFECTS MOMENTUM. If you stay where you are too long, it will affect momentum. You have to make it before your capacity reaches the point of actually needing it. Waiting too long to make the call to move can be costly.

Former NY Yankee catcher Yogi Berra said, "Nobody goes there any more. It's too crowded." It sounds like a contradiction but it's absolutely true. Once people decide your church is too crowded, momentum will stall. You didn't get this far only to let that happen.

TOO SMALL. Generally, this occurs because the church moves too soon and does not have the critical mass it needs to be able to afford the right space. The church becomes impatient with the temporary location and doing portable church. The result is a rushed decision to move to a permanent home followed by the reality that the church cannot afford what it really needs. Because the space is too small, the momentum of the church stalls and a whole new set of challenges sets in.

TOO BIG. Growth is intoxicating. It is easy to think that the growth rate the church is experiencing will continue for a while to come. Church leaders might get carried away with having enough space and, in the process, inadvertently overestimate the financial capacity of the church. Too much mortgage and too

much building to maintain. Then the need to feed the "building monster" begins to drive way too many discussions and decisions in the life of the church. Financial decisions can restrict ministry. It doesn't take long before this becomes a drag on the church.

TOO LATE. This can catch churches by surprise. The church has been in temporary space for quite a while. They see the growth and momentum of the church, but fail to take into account how long it will be before they need more space. Suddenly, it is past time to make a move to permanent space. The church has used up all its weekend options and there is still not enough space. If this happens, it won't take long before momentum stalls - right at the moment the church has been looking forward to for so long.

These three common mistakes are all too easy to make. *That's why I believe that moving to a permanent home is the most critical decision a church plant will make after it becomes viable.*

It affects the church in many ways and for many years. Get this one right and your church plant will have a huge ministry impact for a long time to come!

You have to think it through. You have to consider the magnitude and make sure you have the resources (Luke 14:28-30). Most importantly, you have to pray diligently for God's leading. This is a critical decision, but it is God's church. He has a plan for it. Find that plan and you will have made the best decision!



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REPRODUCE > YOURSELF

by Carter Moss



“It’s not about me.” You probably knew that already, but it’s one of the most important lessons I’ve learned in leading the Montgomery Campus plant at Community Christian Church. It’s not about me.

Many of us grew up in a church where it actually was all about the lead pastor—everything ran through and from him. (Makes me wonder if that’s part of the reason why the average church size in America is still around 70 people—because that’s the most amount of people one person can adequately care for!)

Fortunately, the “not about me” concept has been modeled well for me. It didn’t take me long to realize that our lead pastor (Dave Ferguson), who started this 12-campus multi-site church and has authored several books, would walk into my campus and encounter lots of people who had no idea who he even was.... and he’s perfectly okay with that. He knows it’s not about him.

This is not false-humility, nor am I down-playing the role of leaders. I am a huge believer in the value of leadership. It’s absolutely essential. I have learned that one of the most valuable things we can do as church planters and lead pastors is to *reproduce ourselves*, to empower others and to give away leadership.

I’ve had the opportunity to reproduce myself three different times into apprentice campus pastors, as we’ve now reproduced five new campuses/churches out of our little 400-member campus. It’s definitely been the harder road. We’re constantly in “re-building mode,” as we send off musicians, leaders and

contributors (and friends!) and then need to recruit more, but it’s so worth it. God re-builds us every time.

I like to remind our people that the result of us intentionally giving away leadership and reproducing ourselves is that we now are helping over 1200 people every single week find their way back to God through the locations we’ve helped launch over these last 7 years. (Then I ask them how long they think it would’ve taken to reach 1200 people in our small suburb, in our small building, with only my leadership.)

This is not a new idea for church growth. It’s been God’s plan all along. Jesus’ mission was always meant to be a reproducing one, focused on investing in others. He calls us to “*Go and make disciples of all nations.*” (Matt 28:18) and “*...be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*” (Acts 1:8). Paul is a planter who understood this. He cast vision to Timothy for four generations of leadership reproduction: “*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.*” (2 Tim 2:2)

One of our most important tasks as leaders and planters is to constantly be looking for those “reliable people” whom we can apprentice, develop and release into mission. This will extend your legacy far beyond what you imagined, will make your role a lot more fun, and most importantly, will help further the Jesus Mission to the ends of the earth!



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THE MUST-HAVES OF APPRENTICESHIP



by Eric Metcalf

You can't drive a car without wheels, without an engine or without gasoline. You can't bake a cake without flour or eggs (not a good one anyway). You can't eat a true Chicago hot dog without onions, mustard and relish.

Think about the must-haves you've already determined in your ministry, the things that you've drawn a line in the sand about and simply refused to cross. These often take lots of conviction from God combined with some real life experience for us to develop.

There are a few of the must-haves that God has developed in me when it comes to entrusting people with the high privilege of leadership: Spiritual Velocity, Relational Intelligence & Teachability.

SPIRITUAL VELOCITY.

The apprentice must have a Jesus-centered life, not a life of perfection, but a life centered on Jesus.

Maybe you've heard people list their priorities like this: God is first, family is second, church is third and job is fourth. While there certainly is some pragmatism to looking at things this way, what if it could actually play out more like this: God is at the center of our lives, and everything else revolves around Him and His will.

A person with a Jesus-centered life will be impacted in all areas of

their life: relationships, finances, schedule, behind closed doors, etc.

RELATIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

Relational intelligence is the idea that a potential apprentice needs to have the basic understanding that people matter to God and they need to matter to us. A person with relational intelligence has the knack for seeing the best in people. They're not oblivious to people's growth areas, like some sort of blind optimism. Instead they possess a keen ability to see greatness in someone.

Another attribute of relational intelligence is what our staff likes to call the parking lot test. The test is simply this: when you see the potential apprentice leader's car in the parking lot as you pull in, is your initial reaction to feel excited to see them, or to hope that you'll be able to avoid them? It is basically a chemistry question. When this person walks into a room, how do people feel? Leadership is not solely about the role, it is about relationship. Too

often we assume that simply by giving someone the authority of role, people will follow them. This is not true. If someone cannot lead with relational intelligence, then they aren't really leading at all. They are micro-managing.

TEACHABILITY.

Another must-have is teachability. Teachability = humility + applied coaching. A person has to be truly willing to accept feedback in order to be developed (humility) AND they need to be willing to do the harder work to create a change in his/her character and/or behaviors. In fact, the entire apprenticeship concept is based upon teachability. The process or role can't exist without it. If a person is teachable, he/she must be willing to be affirmed, accept feedback gracefully, and be willing to change how they do things. This teachability needs to be coupled with trust, and we are responsible as leaders to develop that. If an apprentice trusts us as leaders, he/she will be much more open to being apprenticed by us.

Now, go recruit your apprentice! Not sure how? Then pick up your own copy of the *Apprentice Field Guide!*



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NOT ALL GROWTH IS GOOD GROWTH >

by Steve Pike

For leaders starting a new church, there are a few common challenges: *Where do I find people? How do I start with just my family and me and end up with a growing, thriving church?*

From a spiritual perspective, more people = more disciples of Jesus. From a pragmatic perspective, more people = better offerings and more volunteers.

Whenever people walk in the door of a new church, the first reaction of most planters is joy! Joy is a perfectly normal reaction to every new person in the early days of a church, but *wise* planters learn to temper their joy with appropriate caution.

NOT ALL GROWTH IS GOOD GROWTH.

In the earliest months of our new church plant, people were scarce. Twenty five folks listening to my message was a good day. One Sunday, we had over 60 attendees. Joy! The offering more than tripled! I started dreaming about what we might do if the income stayed at this new level. We could buy desperately needed equipment and even think about hiring some staff.

I discovered that all of the new people were members of a house church looking for a place to worship on Sunday. Their leader assured me that they were compatible doctrinally, and that they planned to become part of our church. I felt caution flags waving in my brain, but I agreed to look for a way for our ministries to join forces. They started coming every week, and the offerings were amazing. Surely, I thought, they were part of God's plan to grow His church.

One Sunday, their leader pulled me aside. He asked if they could start using the building for their Bible

Study. I told him that they were very welcome to join us for the mid week Bible Study on Wednesday. He said he would consider the Wednesday night meeting, but really wanted to have their main Bible Study on Tuesday night.

BRIGHT RED WARNING FLAGS WERE WAVING IN MY BRAIN as I explained to him that our church was young; that we all needed to stay focused in the same direction.

He let me know that if we didn't allow them to meet in our building on Tuesday night, they would have to find another church to worship with. "...and you know," he warned, "we bring a lot of money with us." I knew that all too well, but I also recognized that this was a defining moment in the life of the church.

It was clear to me that this group had a completely different set of values than I did. I explained they were always welcome to attend any of our regular meetings, but it was not time for us to have competing bible studies.

The next Sunday, my little flock was back to 25 and the offering was as skimpy as ever. I knew I had done the right thing, and time proved me right. Our church went on to thrive and that Bible study group went on to severely damage at least three other church plants over the next decade.

GROWTH THAT HIJACKS GOD'S UNIQUE PURPOSE FOR YOUR CHURCH IS NOT GOOD GROWTH.



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FAITH IS THE ANTIDOTE TO FEAR

by Dave Page



I was once asked, “What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?” That was easy, I would plant a church. God had clearly called me to start a church, but I was scared to death!

“Imagine a world where your greatest fears become reality.” This is the opening line from the TV show Fear Factor. Welcome to the world of church planting. I experienced an acute case of the fear of failure. What if I didn't succeed?

My biggest concern was that I was going to move us into a new community to start a church with no money, no building and no people! What kind of husband would I be to my new bride? How could we have children if we didn't have a steady income?

The fear of failure is an irrational fear that we will not succeed. This was very real for me. It can lead to a sense of paralysis, which in turn can lead to procrastination and an aborting of the goal.

After God revealed that it was time to start a church, I began to waver in my faith. I had put my house up for sale, but was not taking the steps necessary to begin a new church.

One morning during my quiet time, I read Matthew 6:25-33. In the passage, Jesus describes to His disciples how God the Father would take care of them and therefore they did not have to worry. Since God took care of the birds of the air and the flowers in the field, how much more would He take care of us? The next



statement cut me like a knife, “O you of little faith.” I knew that God had called me to start a church and that I needed to step out in faith, and go but I was afraid.

Church planting is a journey into the unknown. The fear of venturing out alone into new territory is a scary proposition. The reality is you are not alone. God is there.

Jesus said, “And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” God's Word says, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you. So we can say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.’”

Overcoming fear is by far the biggest obstacle for most church planters. Faith is the antidote to fear.

Stepping out in faith and trusting our faithful God is the first step to planting a church. “For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love and self-discipline.”

We started the church four months after we arrived on the field, and in the next few years saw hundreds of people come to know Christ and saw the church grow beyond what we ever imagined.

I wish I would have known then, as I do now, how faithful God would be in the midst of my fear. He will be faithful to you, too.

[Read Dave Page's Bio](#)

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YOU CAN'T. > HE WILL.

by Jonathan Robbins

One of the most *in-my-face* lessons church planting has taught me is something I so badly would have loved to have understood in the early days. It's this:

The great challenge of leadership is having the responsibility of taking people to a place you cannot make them go! It's more than just a challenge, it's the madness of the leadership journey.

You simply cannot make people care, commit, serve, show up on time, give, get in a small group, or grow. If you could, you would.

YOU CAN CAST A HEAVEN-FIRED VISION, BUT A WHITE HOT VISION IS NO GUARANTEE THAT PEOPLE WILL RALLY AROUND IT AS THEY SHOULD, NOT EVEN AS YOU DREAMED, HOPED AND PRAYED THEY WOULD.

We find, time after time in the life of Israel, where God's leader was set on fire from God with a vision or job to do and yet struggled getting the people to follow along in making that vision a reality.

Time after time, Moses had to pull

God's people along through the desert on the way to the Promised Land. They complained and resisted - not because they were godless - but because they were human. They were stubborn, lazy, self-centered, sinful.

Now...who wants to go plant a church?! Ultimately, the catalyst to taking people to where they need to be, not necessarily where they would go on their own, is not just vision alone or even a willingness.

IT TAKES THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF GOD TO MOVE AND CHANGE PEOPLE.

Joshua, Moses' successor, had to have taken the reigns of leadership with a cautious realization that "This ain't gonna be easy. What if they don't follow me?" Notice what God assured Joshua. It's what Moses knew to be true. It's what you'll discover: the power and presence of God!

"...As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them." - Joshua 1:5-6

God wants to see you lead people to the place they need to be with Him more than even you and I do. Never forget that He already has more invested into your church plant than you ever will! It's His Kingdom agenda at stake here, not ours. So as God demonstrated to Moses and communicated to Joshua, you can be sure that if your vision to lead people is from God, then you have His involvement to make it a reality.

YOU CAN LEAD PEOPLE, BUT YOU CAN'T CHANGE THEM. GOD CAN. He wants to use you to make it happen. You will not be able to alone. However, God will be able in you and through you, for His glory!



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THANK YOU TO OUR AUTHORS WHO GRACIOUSLY SHARED THEIR WISDOM



ALEX ABSALOM Originally from England, Alex and his family are missionaries to the United States. He is the Leader of Missional Innovation at RiverTree Christian Church in NE Ohio, a megachurch that is seeing scores of mid-sized Missional Communities being planted and a strong discipling culture being built. Alex leads Synergy, a collaboration between RiverTree, Stadia Church Planting and LoveCanton, which equips leaders of churches and church plants to move into a more missional, disciple-making mode. Alex has co-authored several books, including a new free ebook – *One Of* – from Exponential, about the practicalities of the move into missional life. Check out his blog (alexabsalom.wordpress.com/) for more on missional life & leadership!



NEIL COLE is a church planter. He is the founder & executive director of Church Multiplication Associates & CMAResources, which has helped start hundreds of churches in at least 40 states and 40 nations. He is seen by many as one of the key founders of the simple-church movement. A key training component of this expanding movement is the *Organic Church Planter's Greenhouse – Story 1 and Story 2 Trainings*. (CMAResources.org/greenhouse)

Neil created a discipleship tool known as Life Transformation Groups (LTG), which is making and multiplying disciples all over the globe. He is also the author of multiple books including recently released *Journeys To Significance*, *Church 3.0*, *Organic Leadership*, *Search & Rescue*, *Cultivating a Life for God*, *Organic Church*, *TruthQuest*, *Beyond Church Planting* and *Raising Leaders for the Harvest*. He lives in Long Beach, California with his wife Dana and has three grown children. Find out more about Church Multiplication Associates & CMA Resources at CMAResources.org



MARK DEYMAZ is the founding pastor and directional leader of the Mosaic Church of Central Arkansas.

A recognized leader in the emerging Multi-Ethnic Church Movement, Mark has written three books on the subject including, *Building a Healthy Multi-Ethnic Church*, chosen as a finalist for a Christianity Today Book of the Year Award (2008) and a Resource of the Year Award (2008). His other books include *Ethnic Blends* and *HUP: Should Pastors Accept or Reject the Homogeneous Unit Principle?* In addition, Mark writes regularly for *Outreach Magazine* and is a contributing editor for *Leadership Journal*. His wife Linda is also the author of two books including *Mommy, Please Don't Cry*, an anointed resource providing hope and comfort for parents who grieve the loss of a child.

Mark co-founded the Mosaix Global Network and is the Executive Director. He has also established Mosaic's non-profit, *Vine and Village* and is a former member of Little Rock's Racial and Cultural Diversity Commission.

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JASON DUKES Jason and his wife Jen live just outside of Orlando, FL with their five kids and one on the way. Eight years ago they helped to start WestpointChurch. Since then, they have gratefully served that church family along with starting the ChurchofWestOrange, ReproducingChurches, and HouseBlendCafe.

He has written two books, *Live Sent* and *Beyond MY Church*, and blogs at JasonCDukes.com.



BILL EASUM has a thirty year track record of growing congregations in two denominations. His last church, which he pastored for twenty-four years, grew to the largest United Methodist Church in South Texas. His record of “evangelization” and “social justice” ministries was acknowledged by Industrial Areas Foundation in New York as one of the finest examples in North America. Bill is also the recipient of the prestigious Donald McGavran award for outstanding church leadership.

The past twenty years, Bill has served as a consultant to congregations and denominations. In 1986 he founded 21st Century Strategies (effectivechurch.com) which in 2000 became Easum, Bandy & Associates (EBA) easumbandy.com when he merged with Tom Bandy. In 2008, Bill Easum and Bill Tenny-Brittian reformed 21st Century Strategies, Inc. Together they serve the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ghana and South Africa.

Bill has personally worked in over 700 congregations, some of which are the largest in the nation, and has taught hundreds of thousands of leaders. Bill is a regular contributor to *Religious Product News*, *Net Results Magazine*, and eZine *On Track*, and Co-editor of *The Convergence eBook Series*.

Bill is the author of numerous best-selling books such as *Church Growth Handbook*, *How to Reach Baby Boomers*, *Dancing with Dinosaurs*, *Sacred Cows Make Gourmet Burgers*, *The Complete Ministry Audit*, *Growing Spiritual Redwoods*, *Leadership On The OtherSide*, *Unfreezing Moves*, *Put On Your Own Oxygen Mask First*, *Under The Radar*, *The Nomadic Church*, *Go Big: Leading Your Church to Explosive Growth*, *Go Big with Small Groups*, *A Second Resurrection*, *Ministry in Hard Times*, and *Preaching for Transformation*, all by Abingdon, and *Beyond the Box*, by Group and *Ten Most Common Mistakes of Church Starts* by Chalice.

Bill is a graduate of Baylor University, B.A. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, M.D., and Perkins School of Theology, S.T.M.

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DAVE FERGUSON is a Spiritual Entrepreneur and Lead Pastor at Community Christian Church and Visionary for the NewThing and is the author of *The Big Idea*, *Exponential* and *On The Verge*.



DOUG FOLTZ serves as the Director of Project Management and Coaching for Stadia (stadia.cc). He has helped start 35+ new churches through his work as a project manager. He also oversees Stadia's development systems. Doug served as an associate planter with LifePointe Christian Church in Charlotte, NC and also worked with Passion 4 Planting. He holds degrees from Lincoln Christian University (BA), and Emmanuel School of Religion (MDIV). Doug has a passion to help new churches start healthy and works with church planters to develop systems and strategies to plant the gospel in their communities. Doug has been married to Amanda for 15 years and together they have two beautiful children.



JASON GERDES is married to his wonderful wife Lindsey and has two children. Jackson and Natalie. Jason did not grow up going to church or knowing anything about Jesus, but was radically saved as a teenager. He feels privileged to lead Revolution Church (TheRevolution.tv) in Metro-Atlanta and to train church planters through Launch Network (launchstrong.com)

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CASEY GRAHAM is the founder of Giving Rocket, a company focused on helping the local church have more money for ministry. As the Chief Financial Officer at Mountain Lake Church in Atlanta, Georgia, he gained first-hand experience in funding the church's vision and the challenges many of you face today. He has worked with hundreds of church leaders across the country to help increase giving and wants every church to have access to the strategies he's seen work time and time again.



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JEFF HARRIS is the Senior Pastor of Grace Point Church and for 18 years has grown a handful of people into a thriving Church that leads common people into uncommon life in Jesus. Grace Point is known as a church planting church having planted 68 churches in the last seven years. Jeff launched Missional Association for these churches to be strengthened and launched.

Jeff is also a lead navigator with Auxano, helping churches gain greater vision clarity. He is the author of Leadership Forum. He enjoys mountain biking in his free time.



ANDREW HAWTHORN, OBE is a British evangelist, author and leader of The Message Trust, a Christian mission organization based in Manchester, England. He is also an in-demand speaker at events around the world.

Beginning with concerts and outreach to schools, The Message's work has expanded into tough urban communities, prisons, training and employment and now impacts over 100,000 young people each year.

Andy's tireless commitment to young people and community transformation was honoured as part of the Queen's birthday honours list in 2011 when he was awarded an OBE for services to young people.

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KENNY JAHNG In Kenny's role as Media & Innovation Pastor at Liquid Church, he serves as the primary evangelist of the TGIF Gospel – Twitter, Google, iPad, and Facebook. A pioneer in the use of social media to digitally disseminate the Gospel to a wired generation, Kenny holds an MBA from Columbia Business School and M.Div. from Princeton Theological Seminary. Kenny is also CEO of Big Click Syndicate, LLC serving non-profit and ministry clients with strategic communications and social media coaching/advisory services. He lives just outside of NYC with his wife Grace and two children.



MATT KELLER pastors Next Level Church, the church he planted in 2002 in Ft. Myers, FL. (NextLevelChurch.com). Matt travels and speaks often and is passionate about coaching pastors nationwide through online video coaching networks. (MyNextLevel.me) Matt blogs frequently at MattKellerOnline.com and can be followed on Twitter @matthewkeller. Matt's favorite candy is Skittles.

Matt Keller is the author of *The Up the Middle Church*, a book written for leaders and leadership teams of churches that find themselves living an Up-the-Middle reality. To purchase copies for you and your team go to: UptheMiddle.com. Matt is also the lead pastor of Next Level Church in Fort Myers, FL, a church that began in 2002 with 4 people in a coffee shop and now serves over 1,800 people weekly. Matt blogs at MattKellerOnline.com.



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MARK LEE is the lead pastor of VantagePoint Church started in 2008 with a dream of being the hands and feet of Jesus to their local community. The church has passed out over 30,000 bottles of water, has performed oil changes for single moms, has provided free dental care and more. Since that time the church has grown from a launch team of 25 people to over 900 in weekly attendance. Mark is an avid runner, a wannabe worship leader, a hack theologian and loves every moment spent at home.

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THANK YOU TO OUR AUTHORS WHO GRACIOUSLY SHARED THEIR WISDOM



ERIC METCALF Eric led Small Groups and Campus Pastored at COMMUNITY (communitychristian.org), a multi-site church with 13 locations across Chicago, for 12 years. Eric now provides leadership to NewThing (newthing.org), a growing church planting movement focused on catalyzing a movement of reproducing churches. Under Eric's leadership, NewThing has doubled in size every year for the past 3 years with over 100 churches in highly unchurched cities such as Boston, Manhattan, San Francisco, and Paris, France; with a long term goal of 1,000 churches by 2015. Eric has been married for 13 years to his beautiful wife Erin and has three incredible children: Joey (7), Lydia (6), and Max (3).



BRYAN MILES is CEO & Co-Founder of Miles Advisory Group and is blessed to run this company with his wife, Shannon. Prior to starting MAG, he worked for companies in the tech and construction industries including Cogun, Inc., a national church construction company as the VP of Consulting. Bryan obtained his B.A. in Business from Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Mount Vernon, OH. Bryan, Shannon and their daughter Rainey and son Harper attend church at the Browns Bridge Campus of North Point Community Church. Bryan also enjoys backpacking and mountain climbing.



CARTER MOSS is a former software-developer-turned-pastor who now leads in multiple areas at Community Christian Church in Chicago-land. He is the Campus Pastor of the Montgomery Campus, and is the Small Groups Champion/Catalyst across all 12 locations as well as for NewThing Network. He's a writer, contributing to projects both inside and outside of the church, and has also been caught rapping on stage at weekend services. Carter and his wife Jennifer have three kids: Isaiah, Avery, and Levi.



DR. TOM NEBEL Tom Nebel is the Executive Director of Church Planting for Converge Worldwide, a position he accepted in 2006. Prior to that (1992-2005) he served as Director of Church Planting for the Great Lakes Baptist Conference and Associate Director of TeAmerica, the church planting movement of the Baptist General Conference. He has participated in the planting of more than 50 churches in Wisconsin and hundreds of churches across the United States, currently experiencing a success rate of over 90%. His passion is to fuel regional church planting movements so that they may be effective in expanding the Kingdom of God.

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DR. TOM NEBEL (cont. from previous page) Tom is author of *Empowering Leaders Through Coaching*, *The Coach's Logbook*, *Big Dreams in Small Places: Church Planting in Smaller Communities* and *Church Planting Landmines: Mistakes to Avoid in Years 2-10*. His newest book, *Parent Church Landmines: Ten Mistakes a Multiplying Church Should Avoid*, a co-authorship with Ben Ingebretson, was released 2010.

Tom is an engaging and humorous communicator and a strategic leader. He holds degrees from Denver Seminary and Fuller Theological Seminary. In the words of church planting strategist Bob Logan, "Tom Nebel combines visionary leadership and the solid experience necessary to see church planting movements propel." Tom and Lori make their home in Madison, WI and Orlando, FL. They have two adult children, Andrew and Matthew.



DAVE PAGE Dave Page is the Director of Church Planting for the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA) West District and is also a Strategic Leadership Coach with NEXT Coaching Networks. Dave does one-on-one coaching and network coaching for church planters and lead pastors. He started two churches that grew to over 1000 in weekend attendance. Dave specializes in coaching church planters that launch large thriving churches that reproduce. He taught church planting at Saddleback Church for 10 years and does training both nationally and internationally. Dave is also the founder of Wedding Pastors Network, a Wedding Officiant Network of Pastors in the United States. Dave has a MBA in Leadership from the Ken Blanchard School of Business at Grand Canyon University and a M.Div. from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.



STEVE PIKE Steve's passion for planting began in 1989 when Steve and his wife Cherri, along with their two children, answered God's call to plant a church in Utah. During the 90's, they were privileged to see the church grow to a family of over 400 attendees that helped to plant five additional churches in Utah.

In January 2006, Steve was selected to lead Assemblies of God church planting efforts in the United States and currently serves as National Director for the Church Multiplication Network (CMN). CMN collaborates with church multipliers to effectively equip, strategically fund and innovatively network new faith communities in America. Since 2006, the Assemblies of God has invested over \$4 million directly into local church plants and has planted over 1500 churches across the United States.

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JONATHAN ROBBINS is the Lead Pastor of The Summit Church in Kernersville, NC in the heart of the “Triad” area (centered among the cities of Winston-Salem, High Point, and Greensboro, NC). In 2000, He led a church planting team to plant a church in the Charlotte, NC area that is still going and growing strong. In 2004, God led Jonathan and his family to The Summit Church, a new church plant meeting in a middle school and struggling through a painful leadership transition. In the years that followed they’ve witnessed God heal a wounded church and birth a new vision to reach those far from God in that area. Since 2004, The Summit has been blessed with a permanent facility and grown from 300 to over 3,000 in weekly attendance. Jonathan is a graduate of Liberty University and Southeastern Seminary. He is married to Donna, and they have two daughters: Morgan and Maggie.



JIM SHEPPARD is CEO and principal of Generis, a national consulting firm committed to accelerating generosity toward God-inspired vision for churches, church plants and multi-site churches across all denominations. He is an avid student of generosity and is passionate about spreading it throughout the church so Kingdom projects get resourced. Additionally, Jim is a proven leader and inspirational speaker. He is one of the leading consultants in the field of raising funds for churches and ministry organizations, having personally led giving efforts that have produced in excess of \$900 million for Kingdom related projects. He lives in the Atlanta, GA area with his wife Nancy and their two daughters.



PORTABLE CHURCH® INDUSTRIES is a collective of designers, consultants, builders and producers. Together, they create peace-of-mind solutions for church plants, mobile churches and multi-site churches. In business since 1994, they have had the pleasure of helping almost 2,000 churches find success in mobility. Portable Church® is dedicated to the spreading of the Gospel through planting churches and church multiplication. You can read more about them at portablechurch.com. To read stories about their clients finding success and the clients’ different strategies for reaching their communities, order the [Portable Church® Journal](#). To watch the possibilities, order the [Portable Church® Case Studies DVD](#).

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